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to: Examiner Henry Tran, USPTO

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from: David L. Banner

date: June 25, 2004

subject: Additional proposed amendment material for
Serial No. 09/986,591

pages: 5

Message:

Examiner Tran:

Here is a more complete, informal version of proposed amendments to the above-identified application. I will be in Arlington next Monday through Wednesday and would be happy to discuss this proposed amendment with you in person. You can reach me next week by cell phone: (607) 761-3849. I hope you have a good weekend.

dB

June 25, 2004

To: Examiner Henry Tran

From: David Banner

Re: Proposed Amendment to Serial No. 09/986,951 application

In the Specification:

With reference to the Published Patent Application
2003/0090465, please amend the specification as indicated.

Paragraph 0032:

Referring first to FIGS. 1, 1a, and 2, there are shown perspective views 100 and 200, respectively, of the trackball pointing device of the invention. An ergonomically contoured, "pistol grip", housing 102 contains a miniature trackball element 104 and three push button switches 106a, 106b, 106c disposed within individual curved surfaces in a front region of housing 102 and adapted to interact with three fingers (i.e., the index and two subsequent middle, and ring fingers) 108a, 108b, 108c, respectively of a user's hand as may readily be seen in FIG. 1a. While three switches 106a, 106b, 106c have been chosen for purposes of disclosure, the pointing device 100 of the invention could be provided with no buttons, a single button, two buttons, or three, or even more buttons

and the invention is not considered limited to the number of buttons chosen for purposes of disclosure. In typical computer applications, a minimum of two pointing device buttons are assumed to be present. Switches 106a, 106b, 106c are assumed to be momentary contact switches although other switch configurations could be provided to meet the requirements of a particular operating circumstance or environment.

Paragraph 0033:

Trackball element 104 is disposed on a curved top surface of housing 102 and is typically manipulated by the user's thumb 110. Circuitry (not shown) within housing 102 is adapted to receive input signals from trackball element 104 and switches 106a, 106b, 106c and provide a standardized output signal compatible with the output signal of a standard mouse or other similar pointing device.

In the Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A symmetrical, miniature, hand-held trackball pointing device for

interchangeable use in either a right hand or left hand of a user, comprising:

a) a symmetrical housing adapted and configured to fit interchangeably into a user's right or left hand ~~proximate~~
~~the metacarpal (i.e., first phalangal) region of the~~
~~fingers thereof, , a front portion of said housing~~
~~comprising at least three curved surfaces adapted to snugly~~
~~fit into the first phalangal of the metacarpal portion of a~~
~~index, a middle, and a ring finger, respectively, of said~~
~~user's right or left hand, said housing further comprising~~
~~a rear curved surface adapted to snugly rest in a palm~~
~~portion of said user's right or left hand, said housing~~
being adapted for retention in said user's hand between
said metacarpal regions ~~of said index, middle, and ring~~
~~fingers of said user's hand~~ and a palm thereof ~~by no more~~
~~than a thumb thereof , thereby freeing portions of said~~
~~fingers beyond said post- metacarpal regions of said index,~~
~~middle, and ring fingers~~ for tasks unrelated to said
pointing device;

b) a trackball disposed in a top, curved surface of
said housing and configured for interaction with the thumb
of said right or left hand of said user, and adapted for

generating a trackball signal representative of a position
thereof;

c) ...